

Using the Advice Centre - Service Standards Agreement

Introduction

The Service Standards agreement outlines what the KSU Advice Service provides KU Students and what in return is expected from its service users. The users of UKS' advice service are KU students who are members of KSU, and will be referred to as clients throughout this agreement.

Our Advice Provision

The Advice Service is available between **10am – 4pm, Monday – Friday** (excluding university close days and bank holidays). The Advice Service is based in the Students' Union on Penrhyn Road Campus. The Advice Service can offer appointments in person, telephone, or online through MS Teams and provide support and signposting through email. To book an appointment or speak to an advisor, clients must contact the service through our [Advice Service Contact Form](#).

KSU advisors reserve the right to cancel appointments at short notice but will offer an alternative appointment at the earliest opportunity for both the advisor and the client.

We will not discuss client details with others outside the service, including other clients, family members, or friends, without explicit prior consent from the client. We also ask clients access the service directly, rather than having a family member or friend accessing the service on their behalf. This is so we can ensure reliable and accurate facts.

Due to the level of casework and interest required, we operate strictly within our hours and ask clients to respect this.

Advisors record all client enquiries, case updates, and personal data on AdvicePro, a case management software accessed and used only by KSU advisors and not passed onto any other organisation. "Legitimate interest" is our lawful basis for processing your personal data, due to clients wanting to access evidence of using the service, to keep a record of advice given by KSU advisors and to monitor advice standards.

Anonymous statistical data is collected and shared with the wider KSU staff to support learning, to inform campaigning, and to help improve our service. Anonymised statistical data may also be shared with the University with the aim of improving the student experience. All statistical reports are created so that service users cannot be identified. Clients reserve the right to request that their data is removed from statistical analysis and reporting by contacting us at uks-dataprotection@kingston.ac.uk.

What you can expect from us:

- Advice that is **independent, confidential** and **free**, respecting client confidentiality at all times within the service.
- A safe space with staff that are professional, well trained and non-judgemental.

- A timely response to your query. We will endeavour to reply to e-mails/telephone call backs within five working days. This excludes weekends, bank holidays and if the service is closed for training or during holidays.
- Your personal information will be treated with respect under GDPR. Your personal details and the advice we give you will be recorded using a secure case recording system unless you request otherwise. You have the right to request a copy of your case file.
- The opportunity to provide feedback on our service.
- We will provide accurate, up-to-date, and relevant information to enable clients to make informed decisions regarding the issues affecting them.
- We will ensure our standard of service is of the highest quality and strive for the continuous improvement and professional development of the advice team.
- We will monitor case trends and use our insights to inform plans for positive initiatives which aim to benefit other students or enhance the student experience.
- We will treat all clients fairly and with respect and are committed to providing equality of opportunity, access and care and will not discriminate on the grounds of ethnicity or nationality, sex, age, gender, religious or political beliefs, disability, marital status, family commitments and sexuality in line with KSU EDI Policy.

What we expect from you:

- That you will treat our staff with respect. We will not tolerate abusive, threatening, or violent behaviour towards staff or other service users. This behaviour can result in your access to the Advice Service being withdrawn or restricted.
- You will provide accurate information or documents needed for your case in a timely manner, including informing us of any relevant deadlines that you know about and any updates on your case.
- You will try to seek help at the earliest available opportunity. This gives a stronger chance of resolving a problem before it has reached a more serious stage.
- If we're carrying out any casework for you, you will keep us informed of any relevant information or change in your circumstances.
- Whilst we're carrying out casework for you, you won't ask another advice agency to help with the same issue. We also ask that if you already have another agency acting for you that you won't seek help from us on the same issue as this duplicates work.
- To show up to your appointment within 15 minutes of the start time. If not, we may be forced to cancel the appointment. If you are going to be late, please let us know via email.

- There may be times when a client speaks to an advisor on an issue that we are unable to support with. Our advisors are unable to give advice on topics that they have not been trained in. In these circumstances you will be signposted to a more appropriate service.
- Advisors are unable to provide advice outside of their place of work. If a client wants further guidance they should seek support through appropriate channels.

Feedback:

Clients may be contacted to provide feedback on their experience with the advice service and the support they received from a KSU advisor. Alternatively, a client may reach out and provide feedback directly.

Should you wish to make a complaint about our advice service you may do so by following the Union's complaint procedure found here: [Complaints](#)

All relevant policies are available on the KSU website.